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ACTION DS-01

RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(D)

INFO LOG-00 ADS-00 INR-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 AMAD-01
EAP-01 INRE-00 SCT-03 /011 W

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P 130551Z APR 90
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9843

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 04176

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: ASEC, PTER, KS
SUBJECT: AMNESTY FOR KAL SABOTEUR

REF: SEOUL 3435

1. (U) PRESIDENT ROH TAE WOO, ACTING UPON A RECOMMENDATION OF HIS CABINET, HAS GRANTED A SPECIAL AMNESTY TO MS. KIM HYON-HUI. KIM IS THE SELF-CONFESSED NORTH KOREAN SABOTEUR, WHO ALONG WITH A NORTH KOREAN ACCOMPLICE WHO LATER COMMITTED SUICIDE, PLANTED A BOMB ON A NOVEMBER 1987 KOREA AIRLINES FLIGHT RESULTING IN THE DEATH OF 115 PASSENGERS. THE AMNESTY FREES KIM OF ANY JUDICIAL SENTENCE, INCLUDING THE DEATH PENALTY WHICH WAS UPHELD BY THE KOREAN SUPREME COURT JUST LAST MONTH.

2. (U) THE AMNESTY WAS WIDELY EXPECTED (REFTEL) AND IS CONSISTENT WITH THE ROKG POLICY OF LENIENT TREATMENT TO THOSE WHO, LIKE KIM, REPENT OF BEING NORTH KOREAN AGENTS. THE ROKG IS TAKING THE VIEW THAT SHE, LIKE THOSE WHO DIED ON KA 858, WERE ALL VICTIMS OF THE BRUTALITY OF THE NORTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT. KIM TESTIFIED AT HER TRIAL THAT HER ACT OF TERRORISM WAS ORDERED DIRECTLY BY KIM CHONG-IL, SON OF KIM IL-SUNG AND DESIGNATED HEIR IN NORTH KOREA. SHE
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ALSO HAS MADE SUBSEQUENT PUBLIC DENUNCIATIONS OF NORTH KOREA'S RULING REGIME.

3. (C) POLOFF RECEIVED A CALL APRIL 13 FROM THE WASHINGTON

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: SAMUEL V SMITH
CLASSIFICATION: CONFIDENTIAL REASON: 25X6
DECLASSIFY AFTER: 13 APR 2020
DATE/CASE ID: 13 AUG 2009 200807065

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POST CORRESPONDENT IN SEOUL ASKING IF THE EMBASSY INTENDED TO
COMMENT ON THE RELEASE OF KIM, A CONVICTED INTERNATIONAL
TERRORIST. POLOFF GAVE NO COMMENT. EMBASSY REQUESTS
DEPARTMENT GUIDANCE FOR RESPONDING TO INQUIRIES ABOUT KIM.

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